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ABSTRACT

The opening general session at this conference addressed the challenges of marketing public parks with particular emphasis upon the population of retired persons with the means to travel. The workshops dealt with the responsibilities of park personnel and management for improving services to park visitors. Brief reports are given of the concurrent educational sessions which included the topics of: (1) work management; (2) resource and visitor protection; (3) maintenance of park flora; (4) special event programming; (5) budgeting and finance; (6) employee guidance and counseling; (7) water recreation and management; and (8) park design. (JD)

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE 34TH ANNUAL

# SOUTHWEST PARK AND RECREATION TRAINING INSTITUTE 1989

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**FEBRUARY 5-8, 1989**
**LAKE TEXOMA LODGE**
**KINGSTON, OKLAHOMA**

SP 031 608



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34th Annual

SOUTHWEST PARK AND RECREATION TRAINING INSTITUTE

February 5-8, 1989

Lake Texoma Lodge
Lake Texoma State Park
Kingston, Oklahoma

OBJECTIVES:

Fostering, gathering and disseminating of information with reference to parks and recreation facilities, grounds programs and objectives. To work with all people, particularly of the Southwest area, to encourage a greater degree of professionalism among those in the park and recreation profession. To foster a spirit of cooperation between all agencies related to public park and recreation programs. To encourage and support those in colleges which train people in park, recreation and related fields.

IN COOPERATION WITH:

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS


Officers of the Institute 1988-89 1

Directors 1

TOMA Awards 2

Roster 3-10

Opening General Session 11-12

Workshop Summaries

- The Lubbock Fishery Improvement Program - A Little Bit of Water and a Lot of Recreation 13-14
- Ornamental Grasses 15-16
- Youth Sports, What Are Our Responsibilities? 17
- Employee Guidance and Counseling 18
- Water Management 19
- Soil Bioengineering 20
- Planning Special Events with Little or No Park and Recreation Staff 21
- Videos - A Most Powerful Tool 22
- Special Events Planning 23-24
- Resource and Visitor Protection Used By Some Natural Resource Agencies 25-26
- New Horizons: Innovative Plant Maintenance 27
- Snow Skiing - Rural/Urban 28
- Contracts - Other Than Maintenance 29-30
- Adopt-A-Park 31-33
- Computerized Work Management 34-36
- Planning Techniques for Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcovers 37-38
- Maintenance Impact Statement 39
- Bond Programs - Planning Preparation Spells Success 40-42
- Water Recreation 43-45
- Risk Management Session 46-47
- New Ideas for Program Marketing 48
- Contracting Alternatives: Contract vs. In House 49

Awards Banquet 50

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**Ruby Award**

Jim Fox
Jacklyn Kayne
Dewey Shroyer

**Diamond Award**

Al Johnson

**Emerald Award** (Past President)

Don Wendell

**Ten-Year**

Dee Hardin
Dick Huck
Jacklyn Kayne
Earl London
Bob Overman
Larry Smith

**Twenty-Year**

Eddie Hueston

**Thirty-Year**

Dave Loughridge

## 1989 BRAG NIGHT AWARDS

**Category I**

Richardson - Winner

**Category II**

Dallas - Bring Your Seniors Home - Winner
Dallas - Playgrounds
Women Outward Bound - No. Jefco, Colorado

**Category III**

Shoot It - Winner - Adams Co., Colorado
Solar - Water Smith, Inc.
Beavers - Adams Co., Colorado

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## Opening General Session

The Southwest Park and Recreation Training Institute held its 34th Annual Conference in Texoma, Oklahoma again this year. Don Wendell, President of the Institute opened the General Session on Monday, February 6, by indicating that the theme of this year's conference was "Commitment to Excellence."

Mr. Wendell introduced Eddie Hueston, who gave the invocation. Mr. Wendell asked for a moment of silence in memory of three individuals, who were an important part of the Institute, whom had passed away during the past year - Virgie White, Elo Urbanosky, and Jim Thornton.

Glenn Sullivan, Executive Director of Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, welcomed participants to Texoma, and indicated that this was Oklahoma's Centennial. His department is trying to improve the relationship between the private and public sectors. During the past two years, they have seen an increase in the usage of the parks in Oklahoma and an increased inquiry into what there is to do in Oklahoma.

After Mr. Sullivan's welcome, Mr. Wendell introduced Dave Loughridge, who asked everyone to complete the survey which they were given at registration. Mr. Wendell then indicated that Terry Dopson from Kansas City, and the delegation from Austin were unable to attend the conference due to icy roads. Mr. Wendell introduced Susan Harkness, Assistant Director, Division of State Resorts, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. Ms. Harkness has been with the department for twelve years, the last six in her present position.

Ms. Harkness said her primary responsibility was marketing, and that marketing of the facilities in any park's department is in an infancy stage. Marketing should be a management philosophy. Our profession should be sensitive to the economic and national trends so as to position our product to the customers's needs. She feels that Oklahoma is behind the national trend at the present time. We should keep in mind some of the changes occurring when planning for the future. Older people are going to have a significant impact in the future, with 23% of our lives spent in retirement. Even though the number of families traveling with children is increasing, it is not increasing as much as travel without children. At present, the key motivation for travel is to escape and rest. The interest in exotic (unusual) experiences is increasing, and senior citizens are wanting an active travel experience. Thre is an increasing demand for multigeneration facilities and a rise in health conscience travel.

Ms. Harkness also noted that we are in the memory making business; that we want people to have good memories from a visit to our state parks and resorts. She also suggested we analyze our competition, namely the home backyard. How many people do we know who spend an unsaid amount of money to fix their backyards? We need to find out how many spas and pools are being sold in our area. To determine the needs of our customers, Ms. Harkness also suggested the use of guest surveys, reading the competition's material to see what they are offering, reading economic magazines, and watch fashion, because it is on the edge of consumer need.

Ms. Harkness discussed the image development program at Lake Murray and its success, and the utilization or involvement in co-op advertising.

Mr. Wendell introduced the final speaker, Autie McVicker, Vice President of Watersmith, Inc. Mr. McVicker noted that the phrase "Commitment to Excellence" is widely used, from the side of a bus in Los Angeles, to a welcoming sign in an Oklahoma town. To find the real meaning of the phrase, he consulted Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, to look up the words "commitment" and "excellence." Ultimately, he concluded that "Commitment to Excellence" was a personal obligation to be the best. During his speech, he emphasized that we are the only ones who can commit ourselves to anything. He also emphasized that whatever our job was, or whatever service we provided, in the end it was not ours, rather that it belonged to the community. Finally, he suggested that we each use other people's knowledge and experience for ourselves.

## The Lubbock Fishery Improvement Program - A Little Bit of Water and a Lot of Recreation

Harold L. Schramm

As populations increase so do the numbers of anglers which puts pressure on the oceans, rivers, streams, etc., which then brings about an increase of reservoirs to support the growing populations. Because more and more people are moving into the urban environment, there is pressure put upon these reserviors by the anglers which causes the fish to be less abundant.

What is a fishery? It is made up of three parts: the fish, water, and the anglers. The fish are taken care of by the fishery manager, the water by the environmental planners, but who will take care of the anglers? A fishery biologist will concern himself with what kinds of fish, how many there are out there, the behavior of the fish, and the environmental requirements. We need to know these same answers from the anglers.

Lubbock has provided a very good laboratory for looking at urban fishing. Lubbock is located in a semi-arid area that does not have a lot of public lakes, or waters. There are 19 municipal parks with lakes that are fairly uniformly spread throughout the city.

In 1986 a program was started: The Lubbock Fishery Improvement Program, which is a cooperative effort of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Department of Range and Wildlife Management, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department which provided the stock. The goal was to provide, and enhance the quality of fishing., Another goal was to get the people involved, and educated. To accomplish this other goal was to bring about awareness of the value of the resources, how they are trying to improve the situation, and the procedures that are involved.

The program had two categories of sponsors: funding and working. The funding sponsors were those who gave $1000 per one lake for one year and were acknowledged by the placement of a permanent sign at the lake of their choice. There is also an annual fishing derby and banquet. Working sponsors take care of the fish, and, in general, care for the lakes.

The users are important; one needs to know what they are fishing for and what they are catching. In order to do this, one must interview them. This is what fisheries biologist call a Creel Survey. The Creel Survey covers various categories: demographics, fishing frequency, expenditures, preferences, and regulations

What did they find out?

Fishing Frequency: It is a lifetime pastime with the young anglers being those that were most numerous and frequent. The most popular times of the year to fish is summer and fall, with the frequency being seven days per month. Frequency depended on how far they had to travel.

Expenditures: Varied from $2-7 per person depending on the age and if one was fishing with a parent or by themselves. Since the program Team has been initiated, users have increased, bringing more money into the area.

Preferences: The fish most sought were catfish and large-mouth bass, but people would settle for

"any fish." What is important here is that anglers do have preferences, and these preferences should give direction to the fishery manager.

Regulations: Knowledge of fishing regulations was actually very low; many did not know any. Only about 16% could give an example of a fishing regulation, while 44% of the large-mouth bass anglers knew something about fishing regulations. Awareness is a function of age: persons 45-59 years of age knew most about the regulations.

In conclusion, it may be found that there are a lot of young anglers who are using these lakes very frequently, yet they are unaware of the fishing regulations. It has also been found that anglers are catch orientated, and are using those lakes that are within close proximity. In order for a city fishery program to work, it is important to increase public awareness. This can be done through publications, fishing derbies, sponsorship, and especially through associated projects where the public gets to become more involved in the stocking, and care of the fish. This session has made it clear that is an urban fisheries program is going to work, you must get the community involved, because these are the people who are going to care for the resource.

## Ornamental Grasses

Russell Studebaker

As of 1964 Mr. Studebaker has served as the senior horticulturalist with the Tulsa Parks and Recreation Department. Within his talk he covered the topic of ornamental grasses from their historical value to the present time and how they might be used in the landscape. A slide presentation was provided and gave one the opportunity to see the many grasses suitable to the southwest region.

In recent years the ornamental grasses that were once used, and very popular in Victorian gardens are once again being used and are available to the public. They have been used more and more in the landscape. Most of these grasses are deciduous and provide texture, vertical lines in the landscape, along with the seedheads that form and have potential to be used in dried flower arrangement.

Grasses have always been important to our society which was built upon four or five major food sources: wheat, rice, barley, corn and oats. And while we have been able to utilize their seeds for our consumption, we find that grasses also have decorative value.

In the plains states one is exposed to both tall grass prairies, and short grass prairies which have evolved over thousands of years and are capable of withstanding the harsh climate to thrive.

Some of the grasses that were presented are as listed by the common names:

Big Blue Stem: a native to the plains states that is very common and nutritious grass which has beautiful fall color

Weeping Lovegrass: a common, clump forming grass that is often used by highway departments to control soil erosion that requires low maintenance because its maximum growing height is between 12-14" tall.

Ravenna Grass: a perennial which can be found growing wild along the North and South Canadian Rivers. It grows 8" to 10" tall and develops flowering plumes.

Maiden Grass: a very popular grass of which there are over 40 species and varieties consisting of many sizes and colorations.

Quaking Grass: a native to Texas and Oklahoma, this grass has a very interesting seed head that is rattle-like and will shake and move with a breeze.

Switch Grass: an excellent grass in a native landscape which can provide suitable wildlife cover, food for birds, and soil stabilization. It will grow between 3' to 6' tall in a variety of soils.

Fountain Grass: a grass that is very easy to grow and one that comes in a variety of colors. It is one of the most popular grasses today.

Pampas Grass: limited in its hardiness range, this grass is best suited to a southern climate that does not have harsh winters. It is a very showy grass that is best suited as a specimen.

Giant Reed Grass: used for erosion control and screening, this grass also comes in a variegated form.

Ribbon Grass: grows to 3' tall. This grass also comes in a variegated form. It is very tolerant of a variety of growing conditions and can be very invasive.

Blue Oat Grass: has bluish-green foliage that has a mounding growth habit and holds the flowerheads above the foliage. It is an excellent cool season grass.

Japanese Blood Grass: as the names implies, this grass has very red coloring and a very low growing habit of no more than 10" tall.

Another group of plants that are very similar to the grasses is the sedges, many of which prefer a wet growing situation.

Variegated Sedge: very small size that is used most effectively in a mass planting or as accent in semi-shade situations.

Leatherleaf Sedge: has an interesting rust-brown color and grows in a strong, upright form.

Birdfoot sedge: very small and low growing plant that is best used in a rock garden situation.

With a wide variety of ornamental grasses that are available, it is no wonder that grasses are beginning to show up in the landscape. Grasses offer variety, interest, texture, and the opportunity to use a plant material that requires low maintenance and care.

## Youth Sports, What Are Our Responsibilities?

Hayden M. Karn - Moderator
Jim Scott
Don Booher
Gary Ralston

Youth sports can be divided into three main topics. These topics are Coaching Certification, Facility Maintenance, and Team Selection. Under the first topic, coaching certification, the question arises whether or not to have mandatory certification of coaches. The National Youth Sports Coaching Association (NYSCA) is located in West Palm Beach, Florida. Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Agency and a corporate sponsor, Days Inn of America, the NYSCA was founded in 1981 and is a non-profit organization. The NYSCA's program consist of low cost videos that teach coaching aspects that include psychology of sports, first aid, and a coaches' code of ethics. Before a coach is certified, he/she must take this six hour course and pass a general test. The purpose of the test is that is ensures that all coaches are aware and understand the reponsibilities that he/she is about to undergo. The benefits of this program are cheerfully pleasant. First the program provides an attitude of fun, instead of winning and secondly, better insurance is available along with the possibility of a decrease in lawsuits against the coaches and the agency.

Facilty maintenance is the next concern in youth sports. In preparing fields, the recommendation is to first layout homeplate and the rest of the field will fall in place. Baselines are best defined by using a twelve-inch sod cutter. Spray all turf to eliminate weeds and for a thick rich turf, mow the outfield with a riding mower at a two and one-half inch thickness. For good infield play, the infield should be mowed at a one and one-half inch thickness with a pushmower. A Hollywood style base mounted in a one gallon container in the ground will allow the base to spin to reduce accidents. Check all lights to ensure proper working order. Also be sure that the grounds are completely clean of all trash.

Team selection is the third topic in which recommendations are made for an equal and fair division of players for a competitive season. Baseball is divided by grades in the following categories: (1) Teeball [includes first and second grade children], (2) third and fourth grade, (3) fifth and sixth grade, (4) fourteen and under [includes seventh and eight grade]. Teams are divided by youth performing their hitting and fielding skills. They are then separated on an equal basis by the agency's staff. The reason given for players divided by grade level rather than age level is that some children exceed a certain age requirement while their friends are still younger and playing ball. In girl's softball and soccer, which is co-educational, the players are divided in the same grade brackets as above. However, grades first through sixth grades are split by the agency's staff along with the help of the coaches. Seventh and eigth grade teams demonstrate their skills for two days and then they are drafted by the coaches. In football and basketball, the teams are divided into a sixth grade bracket and a seventh grade bracket. These players demonstrate their skills for a few days and are then split into teams. Their coach is determined by the draw of the hat.

## Employee Guidance and Counseling

Eddie Hueston Jackie Kayne Milton Martin,
Richard Zavala Bonnie Lutz Martha Downy Dee Hardin

One of the most difficult tasks facing any supervisor in any profession has to be dealing with how to handle employee guidance and counseling.

There are many different types of problems that can arise that require decisions by the supervisor. One type of problem is the older employee. Often older employees enjoy their work, work for little pay and usually continue to work if there is no mandatory retirement age. Many older employees have problems when a new supervisor comes into the department and the older employee often feels that this new supervisor does not really care about them.

One of the most common, new problems facing supervisors is when an employee is removed from his position due to a city policy that deals with DWI. In some cities, any employee who receives a DWI or three moving violations in a two year period, will no longer be allowed to drive a city vehicle for a period of one year. This rule has come about with the increase in liability that all cities face. The two year policy is revolving in some cities, meaning that after the two year period is over, another period begins and if the employee breaks any of the above stated policies, he is revoked from driving city vehicles for two more years. If the employee comes back from the suspension, he or she is not automatically put back in their old job. You, as a supervisor, can try to talk with the city administrator about the policy, but policy is policy.

Supervisors often have problems with some employees and if the employee feels that their supervisor is treating them unfairly, he or she can file a grievance. In filing a grievance, there are three steps in the process: (1) Fill out the grievance and give it to your supervisor. After you have given your supervisor the grievance, he or she has three working days to give an oral disposition. (2) If you feel the grievance was not handled properly, the next step is to request an appeal to the superintendent and they then have five working days to handle the grievance. (3) If you still feel that the grievance was not handled properly, you can appeal to the director or the parks board as many times as you wish, until you feel that the grievance has been corrected. If you are always filing grievance, many supervisors will label you as a "Professional Grievor." Any employee that files a grievance, the grievance must be heard and a decision must be made.

One problem facing older employees is when they are asked to share an office with the new employee that comes straight out of college. The new employee is often very excited about working with you and will usually want to hand their diploma up on the wall and you may have worked you way up to the department and not have a diploma. Most small conflicts between the two employees can lead into bigger ones, like the new employee feeling that the older employee is trying to impair their ability to do their job. The best way to handle this type of problem is to formally introduce new employees or supervisors to all new co-workers.

## Water Management

Tom Gandy Jerry Haire Gerald Giese

Water management is the act of regulation in the use of water. Tom Gandy, Jerry Haire, and Gerald Giese discussed the importance of our future supply of water and described ways in which we can conserve it. The topic was broken down into three categories consisting of (1) increasing use and the need for conservation, (2) implementing a water audit, and (3) installing a fertilizer injector system.

Water is our most valuable resource. It is non-renewable and with it, we cannot survive. In recent history, we have seen supplies decrease as the population and need are rapidly increasing. However, we have begun to realize that water management is essential to our ultimate existence. It has been estimated that one-half of all urban water is used outside on vegetation, and one-half of that water is wasted. Lawn water can be conserved by less frequent applications to allow some stress which will force roots deeper and therefore, will create a more stable root system. A good "rule of thumb" is to water until runoff appears, keeping in mind, however, that each of us may be held responsible for any drainage exceeding our properties boundaries. As storage, processing, delivery, and rates increase, it is easy to see how important it is to act before we are forced to react to having no water.

Implementation of a water audit involves the placing of plastic cups at individual sprinkler heads, turning the system on, and upon completion of the cycle, taking measurements of the amounts of water within the cups. These readings will allow you to determine the proper settings for your timer. The benefits of a water audit include:

1. Save money
2. Cost effective (save an average of 30%)
3. Can be implemented immediately
4. Implemented by employees
5. Simple
6. Produces an accurate schedule
7. Easily adjusted
8. Improves water uniformity while minimizing use
9. Creates a position of leadership in water conservation.

Obviously, water auditing is a most effective means of water management, and it presents no drawbacks.

A third and final idea involving water management is the use of a fertilizer injection system. This system allows fertilizer to be combined with water as it is applied to the turf at a rate of 100-250 ppm per application. The single setback for the fertilizer injector system is, for unspecified reasons, that some cities will not allow it. These three effective ideas relating to water management are currently available to us. Each of us must do his or her part in order to make these solutions effective.

## Soil Bioengineering

Roger Scott

Soil Bioengineering is an applied science that combines structural, biological, and ecological concepts to construct living structures for erosion, sediment and flood control. It has been used extensively in Europe since the 1930s and is being re-introduced into the United States. Basically it is a low tech, labor intensive solution to erosion problems that give a soft, green result as opposed to the more common hard concrete approach to erosion problems.

The underlying concept to soil bioengineering is a living structure created with plant roots is far more successful than the traditional concrete and steel structures because the plant roots can tie back into the parent material at greater depths and are more economically feasible than concrete and steel.

Herbaceous and especially woody pioneer species that are able to root from cuttings, form the major portion of soil bioengineering systems. Initially, the unrooted live material mechanically protects the soil. As they root and grow, the plants further reinforce and stabilize the site, strengthening through time. Other plants invade, creating a rich community for long-term site protection.

Live plants excel in stabilizing soils. Top growth intercepts raindrops, filters sediments out of runoff, enriches the soil and increases infiltration. Roots consolidate the soil and act as fibrous inclusions, reinforcing the soil mantle. They provide transpiration. Soil bioengineering work, being live, need not succumb to deterioration as non-living systems.

Living systems, such as the brushlayer, live fascine, live cribwall, live staking and brushmattress, can be applied alone or in combination, to control surface erosion combination, to control surface erosion and shallow mass wasting. The soil bioengineer must consider both the technical and ecological parameters of the site before selecting plant species and systems. Timing and method of installation are also critical concerns.

Adams County has used rock riprap to protect their banks for the last few years, resulting in a river corridor that was beginning to look too structural. The local flood control district was looking for a site to do a bioengineering project and joined with Adams County in a partnership for this project. The purpose of this project was to demonstrate many soil bioengineering techniques while stablizing the river bank. It was a demonstration project and learning project for not only Adams County and the flood control district, but for many of the local agencies, including the division of wildlife.

Soil bioengineering provides an enduring alternative to conventional engineering or can be used in combination with it to reduce costs and increase effectiveness, permanence and aesthetic appeal.

## Planning Special Events with Little or No Park and Recreation Staff

Bobby Sterrett Barbara Young

Planning special events with little of no Park and Recreation staff is a problem some cities have to contend with. More often this problem concerns smaller cities. The problem can be controlled by recruiting volunteers. Volunteers can be a most valuable asset to an under staffed Park and Recreation Department. Successful Park and Recreation recruiting guidelines consist of events, volunteers, thank-you's, and evaluations.

Events should be interesting and fun for the volunteers as well as the community. Most people will become bored with a job if they do the same thing year after year. Rotating volunteers will help to defeat boredom. The type of event is important too. Some suggestions of events are Valentine care making, Easter egg hunting, kite flying, a trade fair, a recreational festival, Halloween and Christmas tree lighting. There are many other events to be planned and thinking of creative ways to involve people is an important part of planning special events.

It is important to keep in mind sources, methods, and involvement when recruiting volunteers. Sources of volunteers can be almost anyone. Some specific groups of volunteers are children, youth, adults, senior adults, and organizations. Good methods of recruiting volunteers will allow your volunteer staff to revolve and grow. Some methods of recruiting are advertisement, sign-up sheets, previous volunteers, individual contact, friends getting friends, and opportunities. To keep recruits revolving and growing, get them more and more involved. A volunteer who feels more and more important to a group will feel a growing responsibility to his or her event. Being flexible with volunteers is an important part of keeping them. One example of being flexible with volunteers is working around their business schedule. In the long run, it will be greatly appreciated. Be sure to offer any assistance to groups that have taken over an event. This will allow you to see that the event is being taken care of properly.

Thank-you's are an important part of planning special events. Thank-you is the only payment volunteers receive. Never be afraid to say "thank-you." Thank-you's will be received warmly anytime before, during, or after an event. types of thank-you's include verbal, written, publicity, signs, and parties.

To keep volunteers happy and events running smoothly, any suggestions given by volunteers are helpful. Evaluation of an event by volunteers let you know how well the even was received, and what changes to make in the future. Changes in events are only natural and should be expected. Planning special events with little or no staff can be done with volunteers.

## Videos - A Most Powerful Tool

Dave Loughridge Bill Kitchen

In recent years, video has strongly become a norm in today's society. Millions of people use it at home for entertainment or to capture the moment of a family reunion. Surfacing now is a business communication aspect of video: presentation and education. This aspect of video in the business world has proven itself to be a most powerful tool.

Video is a powerful tool for presentation because it is cost efficient, convenient, and professional. As technology soars and sales competition of video equipment increases, cost will decrease - making video readily available. Compared to other professional tools such as computers, video equipment is only a fraction of that cost proving it appealing to any budget. The most valuable characteristic of video presentation is convenience. Presentations are now convenient to the presenter and audience as well. Video presenters have an advantage of making corrections they would otherwise regret in a live speech. Mailing the video presentation is convenient to both parties concerned when distance in the past was a costly barrier. Repetition of live speeches can become a bore, but with video, repetition is eliminated. Professionalism is promoted when presentations are introduced with unique audience captivating techniques. Video has opened new doors of different presentation techniques.

Videos can also be used to educate by training and informing. The cost of training can be reduced considerably using video. The training of an employee can be recorded once and used for future employees. This will cut down on time loss and money. Video can be used to inform almost any specific group of people. It can be used for advertisement, informing staff and council members, or the public for their benefit and knowledge of current events. This high technological advancement can also be easily updated for future reference. The versatility of video has become a most powerful tool in the world of business.

## Special Events Planning

Whit Edwards Gary Foreman

Many people use special events in their park systems for many different reasons. They have many benefits to offer both those who participate in the event and visitors of the event. They provide a service to visitors and at the same time, allow an avenue for the park's department staff to communicate its goals and objectives. If you can show the community resident how important or special your parks are, they will support them and protect them more from vandalism. If planned right, one event can bring in more visitors and revenues to the park and the surrounding areas than can be gained over a whole season. An example of this is "The Feast of the Hunter's Moon," a living history event that allows people to live and experience the past. These types of events are more tangible and can teach more than a book or monument.

The most important idea that should be taken into consideration when planning a special event is that it must be unique. It is basic marketing, you must find a way to fulfill a demand someone else is no fulfilling at that time. This will help to insure the success and longevity of the event if is is to be an annual or extended event.

A special event should be planned out in five basic steps as follows:

Step 1. What kind of event will it be?

That is, will it be an arts and crafts fair, a re-enactment or a celebration for a historical event. The choices can go on endlessly until one is chosen to be the best solution or tactic for desired results.

Step 2. Date selection.

When choosing the date for the event to occur, several considerations must be taken. If a historical event, do you hold it on that day, or the weekend prior or following it? Perhaps the time of year is not suitable and the celebration could be postponed to a warmer season of the year.

Conflicts with other community events and the physical proximity of those events may make selecting of another day more practical. If the local high school football team makes the state playoffs, attendance at your event may be drastically reduced, thus making what would normally be a successful event fall short of its desired results.

Step 3. Marketing

The first part of this step is to determine who it is you are trying to get to attend your event. This answer will help you decide what means of communication would best reach your desired audience. If it is a small segment of the population, you might be able to target them through a specialized magazine, such as American History, for historical re-enactment participants and spectators alike.

Another part of this step is to sell the idea to the citizens of your community. Contact your Chamber of Commerce, television and radio stations, and the community support groups. Ask them to help sponsor your project or help by running food booths or directing traffic. If you show these groups how the event can bring visitors and revenue to the city as well as your parks

department, you will have a pretty good chance of getting some free assistance.

Step 4. Mechanics

Mechanics are basically the inner workings of your program. Without sufficient consideration of these issues, most special event programs would be doomed to fail.

A few examples of mechanics are listed below; however, it is important to remember that this is not a complete list. Other considerations will be needed depending on the type of event you are scheduling.

1. Traffic
2. Parking
3. Security
4. Vendors
5. Leasing
6. Ambulance

Some planners like to reverse the marketing and mechanics steps. There is no set way that the process must be carried out; however, as was illustrated above, some areas of mechanics may be solved in the marketing step. Assistance from the community is not only cheaper in the initial investment but also can generate a feeling of support for your department in future endeavors.

Step 5. Planning

This is the step many people try to jump into first without having gone through the other steps. This makes the event very difficult to get off the ground and reduces any chance at success to a bare minimum.

You must make the event convenient to participants and visitors alike. If the application process is long or expensive, fewer people will attend your event. Make sure that if you have the occasion to consider more than one location, do so. If it is too far out of someone's way to reach your event, they most likely will not attend unless it is exceptionally unique. Also, remember to plan for the worse case scenario. You do not want to have to reschedule the event because excessive rain has made a mud puddle out of the only parking area you planned to use.

Consider the limitations of your resources. Children and animals must be given special considerations. If animals are used, it is recommended that well-trained caretakers be used to handle them. If it is a historical event, try to use your resources as they were used in the past, such as a river for boat traffic.

Aesthetics must be considered. You do not want a garbage truck running through an 18th century display. A time line is one way to separate modern America from the past. The area is roped off with the views behind and within the area planned to match the historic time.

With proper planning, a special event or program can mean a great deal of success for all concerned. The public is exposed to something new or simply allowed to escape to another world for awhile. The community gains a significant public relations boost. The park employees gain revenue and an avenue for public attention to the organizations goals and it attributes for the community.

## Resource and Visitor Protection Used By Some Natural Resource Agencies

Bill Runnoe Dan Johnson Mike McCoy
Steve Miller James Duncan

The issue of law enforcement strategies within a park atmosphere is becoming increasingly more important to natural resource agencies on all levels. The increasing emphasis or concern can be attributed primarily to the increased number and types of crimes being committed within our park boundaries. Many criminals, wanted for such serious crimes as murder, have been located within what most people have thought of as a sanctuary from all the problems of society. This fact puts the customer and to a greater extent, our "public assistants" in danger of meeting such person. For this reason, many natural resource area agencies are redefining the roles of park personnel, especially rangers and others who have a great deal of exposure to the public.

The most visible member of all park staff is the ranger. To the public, a ranger is a ranger, no matter whether he is a commissioned law officer or an interpretative ranger makes no difference. In the public eye, the ranger knows everything and can help with any problems. Most agencies would agree that the law officer's duty should be low keyed in the public eye. People want to feel like they can talk to a ranger and not like they must watch what they say because he is just like any other cop. This is a common concern for all park agencies; however, the degree to which an agency follows this varies widely from agency to agency as well as from area to area within that same agency.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is an excellent example of the varying degree of authority given to law enforcement personnel. The major concerns of Corps rangers are public relations, user fee collection, and writing tickets. Their rangers do not carry any type of weapons. Some Corps projects will contract the county sheriffs to patrol and come out when a problem such as domestic abuse or theft occurs. This serves two purposes - the ranger is free of danger and is not seen as a "cop" by the public. The second advantage, when ticketed by a county sheriff, people are forced to pay or go to jail; whereas, a Corps ranger has no authority to arrest or otherwise force the violator to pay the fine. This type of contracting is in effect for two counties in the Texoma region at a cost of $50,000 a year.

The National Park Service handles their crime problems and ranger duties in another way. The main roles of an N.P.S. ranger are visitor relations, ticketing, and some use-fee collection. They are fully commissioned law officers and carry a side arm, as well as a baton. They handle all types of disturbances and crimes within the park boundaries. This fact and the reduction of man power has forced the ranger to become more reactionary in his dealings with the public, thus portraying a more negative image. This change in roles, though somewhat destructive to the Park Service image, is deemed necessary to protect the visitor, resource, and the ranger himself.

The Oklahoma State Park system handles its ranger duties in much the same way as the

Park Service. Their rangers carry a sidearm and a baton as do those in the Park Service; however, their rangers are required to enforce all laws including those relevant to wildlife protection, no matter what their official title is. This adds difficulty to the completion of ranger duties as most parks do not supply boats to its regular ranger, thus one must be commandeered to stop a criminal or felonies act occurring on a lake.

Another rather unique situation exists for the Oklahoma City Parks Department Rangers. These rangers serve under the city police department. They carry sidearms and batons and are given full authority to carry out law enforcement duties, just as any other other policeman for the city. They have an even more serious problem as it is easier for offenders or would be offenders to go to the city park than state or county parks. For this reason, the lake patrol is said to average two arrests per night.

One problem that must be addressed is the increasing technology that criminals have ready access to. The Oklahoma State parks have started carrying 9mm semi-automatic guns. N.P.S. has computer terminals in cars, hooked up to a central system so that more information is available to the officer more rapidly and with less chance of being intercepted by the criminals who have ready access to scanners on out-dated radio equipment. Radar is used by the Corps of Engineers and other agencies as well as signs that say radar is in use even where the system is to expensive to be purchased. Infra-red night scopes and alarm systems are commonly used by the N.P.S. to help deter vandalism and other crimes. Many agencies do not have money to use on such expensive technological advances and therefore, are at a great disadvantage.

Decreased manpower is another serious problem. There are more crimes and fewer rangers in most agencies. It is easier to commit a crime in a park because there are fewer rangers and it is easier to figure out their patrolling schedule for different areas due to this fact.

The average age of rangers has increased to 39 in recent years. For this reason, many agencies such as the N.P.S. have started encouraging physical fitness by offering incentives such as time during business hours to complete an exercise program. This prepares the rangers for the possible confrontations with younger, more agile offenders they may come in contact with.

Changes in laws also causes problems as the ranger must constantly change his tactics so as not to violate the right of those he must deal with. These laws may contradict one another, further adding to the confusion for those in the field.

All these varying degrees of authority can cause confusion for the general public. They do not know who can do what. When they have a problem, should they call the sheriff or the park ranger to get the quickest response.

Law enforcement is becoming an increasingly important issue for all concerned. Agencies must remember to consider the impact of increasing the authority of law officers and weigh the possible negative side effects agains the effects of increased crime gone unchecked or controlled by present, outdated means. It is an individual decision that affects us all for the better or worse.

## New Horizons: Innovative Plant Maintenance

Dewey Shroyer, Janet Atyia

Texas Tech Grounds Maintenance Department has initiated a program using indoor plans to support the financial needs of their greenhouse operation. They offer two services to the Tech campus:

Interior plant installation and maintenance

Party rentals of decorative plants

This program has been made to support itself and pay the wages of the greenhouse supervisor, assistant supervisor, and all equipment needed.

Tech's indoor plant program is currently servicing approximately fifty clients. Potential clients are first surveyed to assure that it is possible to maintain a favorable environment for the plants requested. Areas are surveyed for the amount of light, foot traffic, heating-cooling, and colors used in the room. Types of pots and trays needed should be considered alos.

In gathering materials for a job, be very thorough in what is needed. Show up totally prepared to do a fast and effective display. It is important that no less than three bids are acquired for each job. This will lower cost and better familiarize you with what is offered. When installing plants, bring plenty of cleaning tools because this is a messy job.

Service calls should be made on at least a weekly basis. A checklist that can be followed when inspecting plants is:

General appearance
Drooping
Yellowing
Water Foliage (density)

Plants that are failing are usually lacking one or more of four essential elements:

Warmth
Nutrients/Food
Water
Light

Plants not receiving these in a correct balance can result in plant stress and then defoliating, wilting, or death.

Properly managed indoor plant programs can be very helpful in funding greenhouse operations. Texas Tech has very successfully developed their program into a smooth and self-funding operation.

## Snow Skiing - Rural/Urban

Chris Harris, Bob Overman

The largest amount of ski equipment purchased for a city in the state of Texas was in Dallas. According to Mr. Chris Harris of the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department, along with Anhauser Busch Brewing Co., the two experimented with a 250 ft. long, artificial ski slope.

There was no cost to the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department because it was sponsored entirely by Anhauser Busch Brewing Company. The total cost for them was between $29,000-25,000 for the entire set-up over a three-day period. The Dallas Parks and Recreation Department asked local ski shops to provide the personnel to volunteer their help to assist the skiers. Local radio and television stations also took advantage of the new ski slope by broadcasting from the site, thus providing free advertisement.

In order to help promote the event to the rest of the city, Kiki Cutter and Billy Kidd, both past Olympians, volunteered their time to give free ski lessons to the public. Plymouth Motor co. sponsored a Challenge to see who could beat Billy Kidd in a race. All the money that was raised was donated to the Special Olympics. Over a three-day period, more that 23,000 people hit the artificial slope in Dallas. In fact, they had to turn away hundreds of people to keep the event under control. The Temptations were also there to give a free concert to the public.

With the great success of this past year's skiing exhibition, Dallas Parks and Recreation Department along with Anhauser Busch will promote the 1st Annual Winter Carnival to be held in early December.

A local renovation company, West End Associates, will redevelop houses and shops in the area in order to help with the promotion. There will also be a 60'x50' ice skating rink, a Toy-land for the children, a Holiday Cook-off (sponsored by Pillsbury), and a Pop-off (sponsored by Orville Redebacker).

Bob Overman, Superintendent of Operations, El Paso County, Colorado Springs, CO, discussed briefly the use of county parks in an urban setting, for cross-country skiing. The county has designated over 2.5 miles of trails for not only cross-county skiing, but also for hiking and horseback riding.

## Contracts - Other Than Maintenance

Dee Hardin Charles Dreyfus

Recently, working with privatization in the maintenance field has become a "Hot Topic," according to Dee Hardin. Privatization has become so popular because the private contractor does a better job and it is more cost efficient to the department. There are some problems though: the contract is not binding so you will be taking a risk on productivity. In a large municipality, such as Ft. Worth, it is hard to maintain each and every park, median, or open field every week to a degree of excellence. To combat this problem, along with privatization, there are many volunteer programs implemented for trash pickup, and the volunteers even have their park watchers who report vandalism. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and even church groups are just a few of these volunteer groups that help out.

One major problem with the use of volunteers is that they may not be able to handle the task. These are three steps that must be followed in order to use a volunteer group successfully.

1. Start the job off slowly.
2. See that they (the volunteers) can complete the job.
3. Increase their productivity.

Neighborhood associations have volunteered to help with trash pickup and they even have helped by donating plants and materials to improve their parks or areas of concern. The use of contracting temporary-help such as: street people, and the unemployed can help periodically when picking up trash.

For such problems as lights in the parks, the use of contract maintenance can be beneficial where your maintenance department can't fix it, but make sure you get a contractor where he will fix everything for one base price. This is more cost effective than paying on an hourly wage. The use of private electric companies, such as Texas Electric, has been beneficial in that they charge a small fee per month to fix all damaged, out of reach security lights in the parks.

The problem with grafitti has been slowly dissolving away because volunteer groups help by painting the abused structures and continue to maintain them.

When leasing maintenance equipment from the private sector, such as tractors, make sure you:

1. read the fine print,
2. have a deadline on the contract.

If you follow these helpful hints, then you will avoid spending extra money on the equipment.

In terms of city of beautification, it is best to contact local businesses to get them involved with their areas of the city, and have them donate the time for maintenance and perhaps the plants and other needed materials.

In Dallas, the use of contracts has helped the Parks and Recreation Department as much as in Ft. Worth. According to Mr. Charles Dreyfus, the City of Dallas makes sure that you need to get the City Council's approval and that the contracts are specific. Contracts tend to bring in money,

for example, The Botanical Garden. When there is a change in the contract, then make sure that all responsible parties understand what it is that is going on to avoid any problems in the future.

In dealing with construction contracts, make sure that they are long term. In order to extend a contract, you must:

1. have an Automatic Renewal Option in the previous contract,
2. extend the contract during the last three months of the last year of the current contract.

Negotiating and the writing of the contract must be made by the Park's Director and then sent directly to the City's Attorney for approval before signage. Extending the life of a contract can be valuable if:

1. you are leasing land, equipment, or buildings,
2. you are contracting labor.

Mr. Dreyfus proposes that there are three things that an administrator must know while working with contracts. They are:

1. involve the people (public),
2. make sure everyone understands the contracts,
3. use the contracts to <u>your</u> advantage.

## Adopt-A-Park

Bill McCuaig Janice Miller Reed Kirkpatrick

A major problem in park systems today is littering. In order to clean up a park, it takes manpower, time, and therefore, money to do the job right. However, all cities run on a limited budget that allocates a certain amount of workers, work hours, and money to certain areas of need that park system might have. As a result of these limited resources, a plan has been developed in Pampa, Texas, to try to control littering by getting the citizens involved. The plan has been very successful in keeping the vandalism and litter out of the parks. Adopt-A-Park began after Amarillo started their Park Pals program. Although the Amarillo program was not very successful, the Pampa program was a great success.

First, the Amarillo Park Pals' motto was "Be a park pal. Help keep your park an enjoyable place." The program began as a result of rampant vandalism. Included in the plan was a formulation of rules and regulations for the program; design, maintenance, and general development goals; and community participation. The most important aspect of the plan was for the people to be public servants and utilize the resources they had to clean up the parks.

As the program began, an "open door policy" was created that was used for complaints as well as valuable suggestions. This, in turn, made it necessary to respond to the need of the public. Also, door-to-door visits, as well as follow-up reports made, were very time consuming. Although the Park Pals Program in Amarillo was not too successful, Pampa's Adopt-A-Park Program worked out well.

Reed Kirkpatrick and Janice Miller of Pampa were in charge of getting the information and getting the program started in Pampa. Basically, the idea was to clean Pampa. Adopt-A-Park was used to educate the public about what was happening in the city and try to change the attitudes the citizens had about litter. Pampa has approximately 22,000 people and 31 parks. The Keep Texas Beautiful Program triggered the city of Pampa to start the Adopt-A-Park Program because programs that were similar were successful in smaller communities. In order to have a successful program, there are five steps. They are: planning; promotion; implementation; appreciation and recognition, and follow-up.

First, planning must be done. On this particular project, planning began in June while the actual implementation started the following April. During this time, a committee was created to "clean Pampa." The committee then made a list of goals and objectives to be followed.

Second, the program had to be pormoted. Advertising began in February and continued through April. The Pampa Chamber of Commerce created a list of organizations and 91 letters were sent to get people involved and interested in what was going on. Also, radio, television, newspapers, and brochures were used to get the word out. Programs were then given to corporations that were interested. Thee programs said that if a large corporation wanted to adopt a park, they could hire handicapped, youths, or others to help clean the park and then be able to write it off on their taxes.

Third, the program had to be implemented. All the necessary paperwork had to be done that took care of the liability aspect of the project so that people could begin to adopt. One important aspect was the letter of agreement that had to be drawn up. This included details such as: no restrictions on how many times a park had to be picked up; no time frame was included, although there had to be some degree of commitment; a four to six week trial period to see if interest was still there before installing a $300 redwood sign; etc. Also, the letter explained that the city's responsibilities were to take care of the grass, empty trash, trim trees, and maintain playground equipment. Later, some participants were allowed to plant flowers and trees, paint playground equipment, etc., as long as it all fit into the overall landscape. After the paperwork was completed, the city held an Adopt-A-Park Day to celebrate the kickoff of the program. This was held at the same time as the Keep America Beautiful Program. During the day, park and recreation people visited the parks and served refreshments to citizens involved.

To show the public appreciation, the fourth step was set into motion by placing redwood signs with the names of the people who adopted the part on them. In addition to the signs, certificates were given as well as letters of thanks to participants. A swim day at the city pool was held during the summer and then an appreciation reception was also given to show appreciation.

Last, the final step in creating a successful program is to do follow-ups. This means tht the parks are checked regularly to make sure the litter is picked up and that nothing is wrong in each park. If there is something wrong, a postcard is sent to the adopting person that says that their park needs some work and asks them if they need any help with it.

There were some negative aspects that were apparent, but the positive things that occurred outshined the bad. People began to take interest in their communities and appreciate "their" parks more. Also, the program was used as an educational tool that let people know just how much it takes to keep the parks clean. Because of the Adopt-A-Park Program, the amount of time used for city employees to pick up litter was reduced by 75% and saved the city $25,000. This, in turn, allowed the money and the manpower to be used for better things.

Perhaps the best example of the program is the Cabot Corporation, which adopted a park in an underprivileged neighborhood. A master plan was created and was to be used to build the park in three stages. The first year $10,000 was spent to put in an asphalt, full court, basketball court, as well as benches, lighting, and grills. The second year was used to build a large playground area, while the last year, the goal was to develop a bike trail. During the first day at the site, neighbors stopped to ask what was going on. When they found out, they went home and got shovels and hoes so that they could help out. Because of the neighborhood participation, the park is used practically all the time because, perhaps, they feel like it is more their park than it was before.

As of February, 1989, two-thirds of the parks in Pampa had been adopted. The

Adopt-A-Park Program has been a great success in Pampa and can be used effectively in other areas.

## Computerized Work Management

Mark Howard Don Horton Sonja Dodds

In businesses today, computers are becoming more and more utilized to save time and money. The Parks and Recreation Department in Carrollton, Texas is no exception. A computerized work management program recently developed in Carrollton intends to systematically log and file work orders so managers can make better use of their work force, reduce budget preparation time, and complete accurate justification studies for various entities. The software used by the Carrollton PARD is set up so that materials, equipment, and crew information are listed as they are used for a particular job. This is done on a daily work report that is filled out by each crew leader. The report includes the date, weather, activity code (each job has its own code number), accomplishment, site code, labor (employee and hours expended), equipment (unit number and hours used), and materials (code number and units used). In short, the system is used for landscape activities, material and equipment inventory, and personnel evaluations in efforts to accomplish greater efficiency in the department. This program is utilized by all levels of administration. Supervisors use it as a scheduling and work evaluation tool while upper level management use it as a budgetary device.

Whether is is planning the budget or spot-checking to see if high priority projects are being accomplished, upper level management can obtain an overview of what is happening within the department. As a budgetary tool, managers have a complete log of files at their fingertips. Labor cost, equipment cost and material cost are available within fifteen minutes of request and are no longer obtained by rigorous, labor intensive means.

Supervisors are blessed with ease of operation as they are provided with a complete source of information needed in scheduling, employee evaluations and justification. Each month the computer reports a work history and accomplishment report. The report is sifficient only upon the standards set by managers at the beginning of the fiscal year. These standards are used as a comparison in work accomplished. Are we completing the amount of work planned? Are we above/below average? This allows supervisors to justify the amount of work done. It is also used as a guide in scheduling future work.

Crew leaders are the key to the success of work management operation for they are the ones who complete the work report for which all the information is obtained. The work order is outlined in a very simple form, yet acquires a wide range of information. Below is a sample of the work order filled out by the crew leaders:

Date _____ Weather _____ Activity Code _____

Accomplishment _____ Site Code _____

Employee #_____ Equipment Code _____ Material Code _____

Through this simple work report, managers at any level are able to acquire reports on

employees, site location, or activities for any specified date. Employee reports are specified by employee name and date parameters. The report covers every activity accomplished, where it was accomplished and how long it took to complete the work. Site location reports list the name of the specific site, what activity was accomplished, and who worked at that site for each specified date. Activity reports are park wide. They list activities, employees and equipment for each activity.

At the end of each day, all crew leader work reports are examined by the supervisors then routed to the secretary for input. Input time, if all goes well, is only fifteen to twenty minutes per day. The computer is then asked to produce a copy of all reports as they were put into the system. These reports are routed to the Assistant Park Manager who again reviews the reports for mistakes and corrections are made if needed. This maximizes accuracy and makes for usable reports and an efficient system.

The activity date is calculated by using the activity code, accomplishment, and site code information from the daily reports, which takes approximately fifteen minutes a day to process. An activity description file is in the system that includes the code, title, inventory unit (acres, total number, square feet, etc), work unit (acres, labor hours, total number, etc.), and if the location is reported. This file is used to create a cost file which includes a resource class, resource type, planned unit cost, actual unit cost, unit of measure, and the availability.

This, in turn, allows an activity master list to be done which shows the activity done, what materials and equipment used, and who it took to do the task. Calculations used from these files are used to develop a working budget for the Parks Department, which is called the Work Program and Budget. It is broken down into the specific activity, the inventory units, work units, effort level, crew size, and crew days it required, as well as the cost of labor, equipment, and materials, and finally, the total cost of the activity. The inventory of the materials, as well as the equipment, is easily done through the daily reports.

The remainder of the system involves employee evaluation, according to the daily reports which are used to create labor-day distribution charts show the activity code, the title of the activity, the total percent as well as the number of labor days, the percent and number of day spent doing each activity each month. Next, the monthly progress reports list the activity code and title, the work accomplished (month planned, month actual, year-to-date planned, and year-to-date actual), and the dollars spent (divided into same categories as work accomplished). This report shows what was expected in comparison to what was actually done as well as how much it cost to do the activity. The labor utilization detail is used to evaluate each individual employee as to which activity was done, how long it took, and when it was done. This then allows a labor utilization summary to be done which shows the information by listing it by each day of the week. These reports are used to determine what a particular employee did each hour he/she was working that week. Evaluation scan then be done to determine weaknesses as well as strong points that particular individual has so that improvements or awards can be recommended.

Each member of the panel strongly recommended this type of system to any department who is constantly plagued with labor intensive record keeping. If, on the other hand, the department is still small in size, and they only keep track of a hand full of employees, computerized work management at this scale is discouraged.

## Planning Techniques for Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcovers

Carl Whitcomb John S. Guthrie

Plants endure a substantial amount of stress when making the transition from a nursery setting to the new landscape. It is a traumatic time for the plant, whereby, good scientific installation principals are beneficial to ensure a high survival rate and in alleviating a large degree of stress to the plant.

Three pre-installation tests are required to determine the suitability for planting. First, evaluate the soil's internal drainage using a percolation test. This is easily accomplished by placing water within a planting hole and recording the amount of time required to complete percolation. If such time is less than 24 hours, percolation is satisfactory for planting. Secondly, conduct a soils test to determine its chemical composition. Most samples can be sent to state laboratories or universities for analysis. Turn-around time will be dependent upon the institution. Thirdly, conduct a water quality analysis.

Once the information has been obtained form the above tests, any necessary alterations can be formulated. Install a drainage system as governed by the percolation test. Incorporate any fertilizer necessary as shown by the soils test or as needed to compensate for the irrigation water quality.

All planting holes should be three times the diameter of the root ball. If drainage is questionable, all plants should be planted shallow and mounded at the base. Always replace existing soil around all plants to a firm condition. Never compact for aeration loss will result in poor root performance. Avoid using soil amendments unless special circumstances prevail. In the condition of extremely poor soils, remove and replace with appropriate field soil.

Once the planting is complete, all trees should be securely staked. A three-wire system is most appropriate. It is important that a protective covering between the wire and plant material be used to prevent damage to the plant. Leave stakes in place no longer than six months, with the exception of a 5 inch or larger stem diameter. All stem protectors should be expandable to allow for growth.

Pruning should only occur to damaged or weak branches. The greater the amount of vegetative canopy results in a larger amount of energy produced, consequently, a better potential for faster growing roots exists.

Good water practices are critical for plant material to establish themselves. As a rule of thumb, water moves from a coarse textured substance to a fine textured substance; drainage systems should be adopted accordingly with respect to soil texture. Always ensure an adequte availability of water and use a mulch as a water retention aid. Mulch will also aid in weed control and serve to help regulate soil temperature. Mulch all exposed soil surfaces to the depth of two inches and do not exceed four inches. Place a porous weed barrier between soil surface and mulching material; however, never use plastic sheeting as a barrier for it may reduce or eliminate gas exchange between the soil and the air.

Proper installation procedures are essential to economic efficiency. Good planting techniques coupled with good management practices can lead to minimal maintenance requirements during the life of the landscape.

## Maintenance Impact Statement

Paul Gooch

A major concern of park operations as they exist today is the increasing difficulty in securing adequate funding. More and more, it is becoming important to be able to clearly justify operational costs. Forecasting budgets and prioritizing are vital tools in managing operations and essential for revenue justification. The maintenance impact statement is a system designed to allow the agency a better prepared forecast of budget requirements.

In a typical scenario, a department is faced with an increasing demand for the creation of new parks and recreational facilities compounded by expending maintenance costs of existing facilities. In most cases, tax dollars do not increase. Many new facilities are being build on bond programs. For this reason, park administrators are having to become superb lobbyist to be able to secure funds for operations and development from councils or city managers.

The maintenance impact statement is an excellent management program where by a department head can accurately project costs. Many times with other management programs, it becomes difficult to justify or accurately forecast. Councils or city managers might feel more competent determining allocations based on sound projections; consequently, the maintenance impact statement could give a department an advantage.

The maintenance impact statement provides information to analyze and access the feasibility of proposed facilities. It can recognize or determine when maintenance cost will exceed development costs by forecasting the life cycle of maintenance cost of a facility. The impact statement is an excellent way to force planners to come forth at an early stage to make adjustments relative to available capital.

Within the structure of the impact statements, a total description of each facility is documented. From this point, management is able to suggest what level of service is required. The level of service will contribute to the cost projection. Inclusive of the cost of service is the travel time required to and from the site.

A flow chart of how the maintenance impact statements would evolve includes five steps. First, preliminary design of the development is obtained. It then begins review by the maintenance department. Following review, the department interjects input. The document then is distributed for inter-agency review and comment. After the review process has been completed, a final cost accounting is calculated based on the input from review. It then begins its journey for approval through the appropriate change of command.

In conclusion, the maintenance impact statement can prove to serve as an excellent tool for forecasting budgets. The statement allows the agency to account for all project requirements and relative costs. For purposes of securing funds, the maintenance impact statement allows for accuracy that can be helpful to the council.

## Bond Programs - Planning Preparation Spells Success

Bob Hall Jim Fox

In using bonds, there are two different types. The most common type of bond is the general obligation bond. This type of bond is what cities generally use and they are supported by ad valorem taxes. The other type of bond is the revenue bond. This type of bond is not common as the general obligation bond. Revenue bonds are supported by the facility that they were approved for. In figuring out how to insure the success of your bond program, here are the guidelines to follow:

PREPARING FOR A BOND PROGRAM

Conduct and Analyze a Needs Assessment/Survey

- Provides a basis for an assessment of your market
- Provides a basis for your master plan

Conduct an Inventory of Facilities and Identfty Infrastructure Status

- Inventory of facilities, programs, and services is a prerequisite for master planning
- In older/aging systems infrastructure is a major consideration and must also be addressed in the master plan
- Inventory private recreation facilities and recreation retailers

Develop Master Plan

- Provides basis for a bond program

Identify Special Interest Groups and Perceived Needs

- Identify low income populations, minorities, athletic organizations, environmental groups, other recreation service providers
- Identify perceived needs

Define Political Districts

- Identify projects and funding proposed by district

Determine Financial Capabilities

- How must additional debt is your governmental entity willing to shoulder?
- What impact will these projects and programs have on your operating budget?
- How do parks and recreation needs compare to other needs in your governmental entity ...what does the big picture look like?
- What is the impact of your proposal on ad valorem taxes?

STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

Develop a Citizen Bond Study Committee

- Gives additional creditibility to your program

- May be used as a source to promote your bond program
- Provides valuable insight into public perception

Consider the Revenue Bond Option

- If your project qualifies, there is no impact on ad valorem taxes

Design your Bond Program for Group Support

- Projects targeted at special interest groups can garner support for the total bond program

Controversial Projects

- Should they be included or broken out to be voted on as a separate issue?

Infrastructure Vs. New/Expanded Projects

- Some infrastructure projects can gain strong support for your bond program because they represent or impact facilities currently in use

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A BOND PROGRAM

Cost Estimating for a Project

- Seek help from a consultant/contractor, if necessary
- Do not guess at a project's cost...Allow yourself the time to prepare a reasonably detailed cost estimate which is site specific...Keep your notes and plans for reference.
- Consider all related costs...utilities, A&E fees, surveys, testing, etc.
- Include a reasonable amount for contingencies

Scheduling Projects

- Unless you have a specific schedule for the sale of bond, figure inflation rates as through all your projects were going to be completed at the mid-point of the bond issue.
- Compound your calculations and distribute projects on a straight line basis with respect to cost.
- Honor commitments to schedule.
- Coordinate projects with programming and both with your operating budget.

Project Impact on Debt Service

- Calculate tax tate increase and number of cents increase per $100 valuation
- Calculate increase in monthly and annual dollars for an average price home...state the price

COMMUNICATION

A/V Presentations

- Government produced programs must be for information purposes only and may not contain promotions (Oklahoma and Texas)
- Strive for audio and visual stimulation

Brochures

- Promotional brochures should be prepared and produced through a private entity
- Government produced brochures can be effective if the information is presented in a visually attractive format and is accurate and not excessively wordy

Speaker's Bureau

- A speaker's bureau can be quite effective is the speaker is talented and knowledgeable
- Most effective when combined with audio/visual presentations

## Water Recreation

Sandra Youngblood

To have a good program at the aquatic center, you must start early. Very few supervisors start plans for their summer activities in February; however, most should. This gives them plenty of time to coordinate activities and classes to possibly increase revenue for their pool. To start out the programming, the supervisors must consider two things:

1. For whom are you targeting your programs
2. Needs of your community (Boy Scouts, Senior Citizens, etc.)

Both of these can be achieved by surveys or questionnaires. Take the results of these surveys and use them to improve your aquatic center. If something works, use it.

Here are some typical pool programs that you can implement at your aquatic recreation center:

A. Instruction
   1. Swimming, diving, skin diving, SCUBA
      a. Red Cross
      b. Safety courses
      c. Long Fellows Whales Tails for kids

B. Recreational swimming

C. Free swims
   1. Instructional
   2. Recreational (possibly sponsored by places like McDonalds)

D. Lifesaving and water safety instruction

E. Swim teams
   1. Swim meets between pools around town to create competition and keep them in shape

F. Swimming for handicapped persons
   1. Set aside time especially for them
   2. Do it for free to help certain groups of people in your community

G. Synchronized swimming groups

H. Shows, pageants, and swim meets

I. Special groups - offer group rates
   1. Boy Scouts
   2. Girl Scouts
   3. Day camps - with colleges
   4. Day cares

J. Special activities - must be planned early

   1. Canoeing - demonstration sport

2. Boating - demonstration sport
3. Bait and spin casting - creates revenue
4. Fly casting - creates revenue
5. Model boat shows or races
6. Dive-in movies
7. Boat show/water safety program
8. Volleyball league/tournaments
9. Basketball leagues/tournaments
10. Swim-a-thons
11. Bi/triathalons

Allow your personnel the time enough to hire their personnel to enable the pools to have these special activities and special groups so they can target the groups in the community.

There are many ways to cut costs at your aquatic centers. Here are a few ways to do this:

A. Pool disinfecting
1. Decide which type of disinfecting agent you use based on characteristics of pool

B. Pool filters
1. The better it is, the more costs you will cut

C. Pool vacuuming systems
1. Clean pools bring people back

D. Saving energy
1. Solar hear
2. Pool blankets
   a. does not allow the heat to escape from the pool

While you are cutting costs, you can, at the same time, generate revenue. The location and target groups you have selected earlier will aid you in your ideas for revenue generating. Here are a few examples of revenue generators:

A. Waterslides
1. Creates increase in concession sales

B. Facility design
1. Target groups
   a. Sunbathers
   b. Picnic areas

C. Snack bar vs. vending machines
1. Target groups should aid in decision

D. Wave pool
1. Increases attendance

E. Entrance fees and season passes
1. People sometimes use passes, sometimes they don't

F. Administrative staff
   1. Treat the customer properly and they will return

G. Pool staff

H. Swim season length
   1. Based on target groups

I. Pool hours
   1. Lengthen or shorten to maximize efficiency

J Pool design

The aquatic center is for the community. This is the goal of any recreational facility - to please the customer. The way your pool looks, how clean it is, and how pleasant your staff is will determine the success of your aquatic center. If it is pleasing and a joy to be at, the customer will return day after day to your pool and not to a private pool nearby.

## Risk Management Session

David Huffine

Risk management is the process of minimizing loss from accidents, fires, natural causes, or crime. Loss reduction can be accomplished by:

Avoiding Risk. Actions that are hazardous can be discarded. For example, turning waste disposal services over to private contractors could cease sponsorship of special events, such as fairs or races.

Preventing Risk. Keeping actions that result in loss from happening is the best strategy for minimizing loss. While it is impossible to eliminate human actions or natural calamities that produce destruction, injury, and death, constant efforts at prevention are proven loss reducers. Safety engineering and education, employee training and screening, and written operational procedures can all help accomplish this goal.

Transferring Risk. Avoiding risk is not always possible. In fact, one may find it is particularly difficult to accomplish, especially if it means giving up or reducing services. One alternative is to transfer risk through the purchase of insurance. There are many ways of transferring risk. Leasing vehicles and equipment is one means, if the owner retains all the risk for damage and liability.

Retaining Risk. This simply means to continue to operate and take whatever chances you must. Under most circumstances, risks should be retained only if they happen frequently and are not individually or collectively very costly. There are, however, several approaches to retaining risk that can eliminate the risk retained. first, a contingency fund for payment of losses can be established. This is a form of self-insurance, and can be effective. However, medium and small sized agencies can often find it difficult to carry enough reserve to adequately protect it against all losses. Second, the agency may retain part of the risk by publicly buying deductible insurance or co-insurance. Great care must e taken not to retain more risk than the city can afford. High deductibles and co-insurance will not do the municipality any good if the city cannot afford its share.

Risk Management should operate as a precise and continuing program of Parks and Recreation departments. The basic steps in risk management are:

Investigation - The first step in the process is to determine what hazards are present.

Evaluation and Assessment - The next step is to determine how big or severe a loss might be and how often various types of losses may occur.

Reduction or Elimination - Once the possibility and potential size of losses are determined, actions should be taken to minimize the possibility of their happening.

Management - This final step is actually the ongoing risk management

program.

These can be considered the building blocks and all must be carefully followed to get effective results.

A good source for developing a risk management program is the booklet: Risk Management for Park, Recreation and Leisure Services by James Peterson, Indiana University, 1987.

## New Ideas for Program Marketing

Ron Carpenter Dave Loughridge Roger Scott

Advertising has become a major asset in the past few years to our parks and recreational facilities. It has been a way for our cities to show the public the advantages of going out and enjoying sites which their tax money has helped to establish. It opens the public's eyes to things they never knew existed inside their city limits.

The key to advertising these public facilities is to sell yourself, as well as the product, to the people. Examine the facilities that you have to offer and make the public want to know more and see more of what you have. Cities should have resources to gather statistics on their publics to determine what will do best in entertaining and maintaining their enjoyment when they visit your site. Look at the competition from other sources and be able to get involved with the high tech society.

There are many resources readily available to use for any event or interesting site you need the public to know about. One good technique is to produce good literature on your desk-top publishing. Slide presentations by mail with color prints and different graphic designs will always capture the customer's eye. Billboards are a way to advertise upcoming events or an interesting historical site. These billboards must always be kept up-to-date to be effective. Piggybacking on large corporations for radio and television spots is also effective and economic. The corporation pays the majority of the bill while the city offers it something that will benefit its advertising media.

Remember to target the market and entice people with a wide variety of musical and cultural events. Try to draw the public from all different ages, races and economic backgrounds. Also, the use of volunteers to plant trees, pick up litter, or to plan an event to honor a long standing citizen is a good idea. Give the credit to someone else.

Keep the public informed of events and make sure they are involved in some way about what is going on. Be sure they enjoy what is going on, because people talking to people is one of the very best forms of advertising known in our society today.

## Contracting Alternatives: Contract vs. In House

Ron Carpenter Dee Hardin Shellene Veach Richard Zavala

Privatization is the act of contracting out services to a private business to lessen the strain on park and employees in everyday work routines. This method can be very beneficial in some areas, but, also it brings long many problems which need to be solved before it can be totally successful. Contracts are being used in services as garbage collection, grounds maintenance, litter control, and restroom cleanup.

The benefits of these contracts seem very good at first glance, but must be looked at closely to get the whole picture. One of the big benefits of this method of performing services is that it would free city employees to do other more skilled jobs. Other benefits would be that the city has no overhead, because the equipment is not their responsibility to maintain and keep running. A contractor also requires no fringe benefits as the city worker does. His employees are covered by a private insurance company, thus saving the city taxpayers many dollars in the long run. A contractor can also do the job cheaper and faster than city employees. It would be best if the contract labor were used only on simple jobs where no disciplined labor is involved; this could eliminate many problems that might arise.

The problems facing privatization are many. Projects can lead to deeper and more costly problems if the work is not done under strict supervision. It must be clearly stated what the job is and the specifications should be followed completely by the contractor. In order for this to be a success, the contractor cannot cut corners and must agree to have his work inspected each time a job is completed. Another problem is the time and money spent on the bidding process before the work actually begins. Most cities are required to take the lowest bidder and this person may not have the right equipment or enough equipment to complete the designated job. Contractors must be qualified before the contract is signed. Their equipment must be checked, and references should be available for further information if needed. The contractor should also be made responsible for all damaged property on the site which occurs while his work is in progress. Examples are sprinkler heads, water spouts, fences, and other existing material.

The biggest problem when dealing with contracts is the loss of workers by the city. The city has a long-term investment in these workers. These people know how to handle special problems when they do occur in everyday work situations. Another big asset is that they are reliable and will show up to do their job on a daily basis.

The problems that go along with privatization definitely outweigh the benefits. When and if these problems can be solved, privatization may become very helpful in maintaining our cities, parks, and recreational areas in the future.

## AWARDS BANQUET

Eddie Hueston - Master of Ceremonies

Entertainment - Falderal

Wednesday - February 8, 1989

Breakfast

Linda Rossen - The Land Run